Rs. 288.65 crores, which further got reduced to Rs. 255.36 crores as on 30.11.99.

(c) and (d) The responsibility for ensuring timely payment of cane prices dues to the farmers by the sugar mills lies with the State Governments, who have necessary powers and field agencies to ensure such payments. The Central Government on its part has been drawing the attention of the State Governments to the provision of the Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966 including payment of interest in the case of delay beyond 15 days and they are being advised at the highest level from time to time to expedite clearance of cane price arrears. Central Government has also been pursuing a policy of encouraging stability and reasonable level of sugar prices in the domestic market through judicious release of free sale sugar quotas to enable the sugar factories to clear the cane price dues of the farmers.

**Revamping the PDS**

174. SHRI ABANI ROY:
SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:
SHRI GAYA SINGH:

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have been actively considering to revamp restructure the PDS throughout the country;

(b) if so, the details and the objective thereof;

(c) whether the foodgrains distributed under PDS are mostly of inferior quality;

(d) if so, whether Government would ensure procurement of only good quality foodgrains for distribution under PDS; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHRIRAM CHAUHAN): (a) and (b) The Government has been

receiving inputs that the current Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) suffers from some inadequacies and is engaged in discussions with the States to seek their views as well as to impress on them the steps to make the system efficient.

(c) to (e) Only good quality foodgrains conforming to PFA standards and free from insect inspections are supplied to States/ UTs for distribution under PDS. Foodgrains strictly conforming to prescribed quality specifications are procured by FCI and State agencies for distribution under PDS.

**Ozone depletion**

175. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL:
DR. GOPALRAO VITHALRAO PATIL:

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any studies have been undertaken to find out the effects of Ozone depletion;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what are the bad effects of ozone depletion and who are the sufferers;

(d) what are the emission sources of ozone; and

(e) what steps are being taken to prevent release of ozone depleting gases in the atmosphere and how far the objective has been achieved?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI BABU LAL MARANDI): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Scientific studies have revealed that the depletion of ozone layer affects human health with potential risk of eye diseases, skin cancer and infectious diseases. It also affects plants and animals in aquatic eco-systems, bio-geo chemical cycles, air quality and materials.